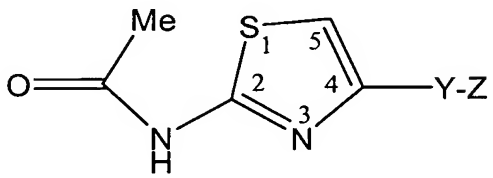
IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A compound of the formula (I):

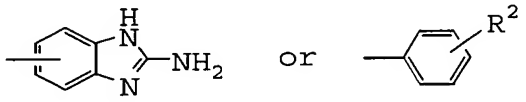


(I)

wherein the 1,3-thiazole ring is optionally substituted at the 5-position;

Y is ~~a bond,~~ lower alkylene, lower alkenylene or –CONH-; and

Z is a group of the formula:



wherein R^2 is a group of the formula: -A-B-D-E,

wherein

A is a bond, lower alkylene, -NH- or $–SO_2$-;

B is a bond, lower alkylene, -CO- or –O-;

D is a bond, lower alkylene, -NH- or $–CH_2NH$-; provided that B and D are not both simultaneously bonds, and

E is ~~optionally protected~~ amino, which may be optionally protected, $-N=CH_2$,

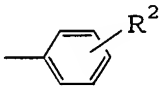
wherein

Q is –S- or –NH-; and

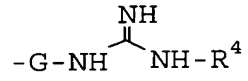
R^3 is hydrogen, lower alkyl, lower alkylthio, or -NH-R^4, wherein R^4 is hydrogen, $-NH_2$ or lower alkyl;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The compound of claim 1, wherein Z is a group of the formula:



wherein R^2 is a group of the formula:

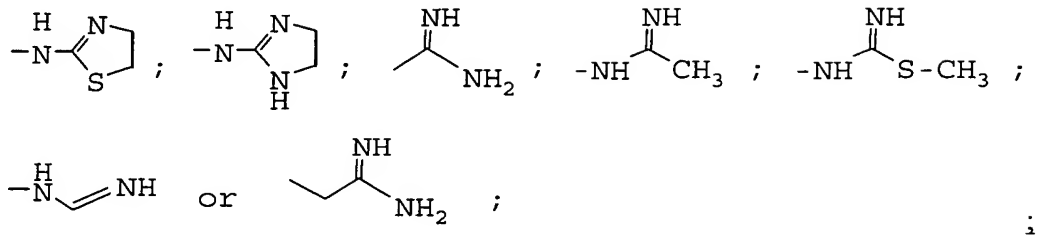
 (wherein G is a bond, $-NHCOCH_2-$ or lower alkylene and R^4 is hydrogen, $-NH_2$ or lower alkyl);

$-NH_2$;

$-CH_2NH_2$;

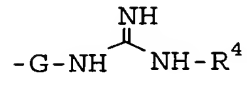
$-CH_2ONH_2$;

$-CH_2ON=CH_2$;



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

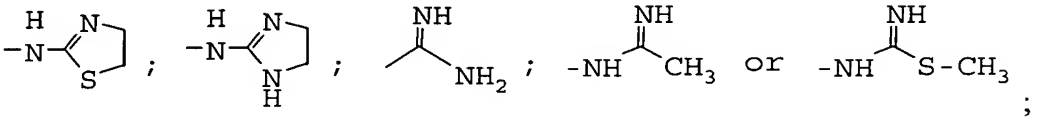
Claim 3 (Original): The compound of claim 2, wherein R^2 is a group of the formula:

 (wherein G is a bond, $-NHCOCH_2-$ or lower alkylene and R^4 is hydrogen or lower alkyl);

$-CH_2NH_2$;

$-CH_2ONH_2$;

$-CH_2ON=CH_2$;



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

Claim 4 (Cancelled)

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The compound of claim 1, wherein the compound is:

N-{4-[2-(4-{[amino(imino)methyl]amino}phenyl)ethyl]-1,3-thiazol-2-yl}acetamide,

N-{4-[2-(4-{[amino(imino)methyl]amino}phenyl)ethyl]-5-[4(methylsulfonyl)benzyl]-1,3-thiazol-2-yl}acetamide,

N-{4-[2-(4-{[hydrazino(imino)methyl]amino}phenyl)ethyl]-5-[4-(methylsulfonyl)benzyl]-1,3-thiazol-2-yl}acetamide,

N-{4-[2-(4-{[hydrazino(imino)methyl]amino}phenyl)ethyl]-1,3-thiazol-2-yl}acetamide, or

N-(4-{2-[4-(2-{[amino(imino)methyl]amino}ethyl)phenyl]ethyl}-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)acetamide[[,]];

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

Claim 6 (Canceled)

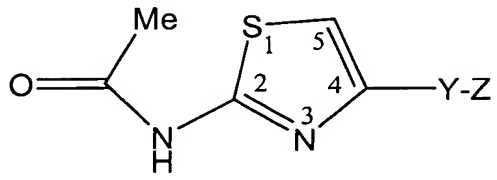
Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A pharmaceutical composition, which comprises:

~~, as an active ingredient,~~

the compound of claim 1 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and

a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or excipient.

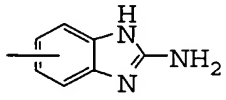
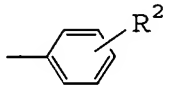
Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A method for producing a compound of ~~the~~ formula (I):



(I)

wherein the 1,3-thiazole ring is optionally substituted at the 5-position;

Y is ~~a bond,~~ lower alkylene, lower alkenylene or –CONH-; and

Z is a group of the formula:  or 

wherein R^2 is a group of the formula: -A-B-D-E

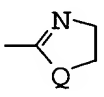
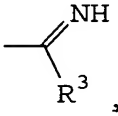
wherein

A is a bond, lower alkylene, -NH- or $–SO_2$-;

B is a bond, lower alkylene, -CO- or –O-;

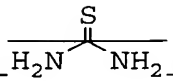
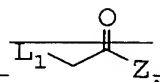
D is a bond, lower alkylene, -NH- or $–CH_2NH$-; provided that B and D are not simultaneously bonds, and

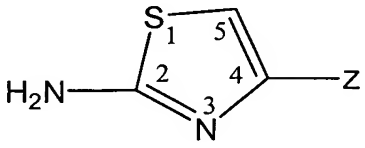
E is ~~optionally protected~~ amino, which is optionally protected, $-N=CH_2$,

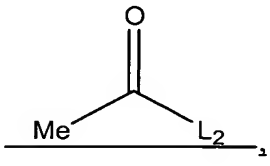
 or  , wherein Q is –S- or –NH-; and R^3 is hydrogen, lower alkyl, lower alkylthio or $-NH-R^4$, wherein R^4 is hydrogen, $-NH_2$ or lower alkyl;

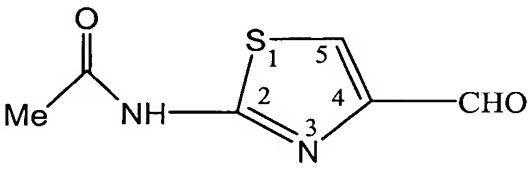
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof[[,]];

which method comprises at least one step selected from the group consisting of ~~(i)~~, (ii), (iii), (iv) and [[to]] (v):

~~(i) reacting Compound (1):~~  ~~with Compound (2):~~  ~~, wherein L_1 is a leaving group and Z is as defined above, or a salt thereof;~~

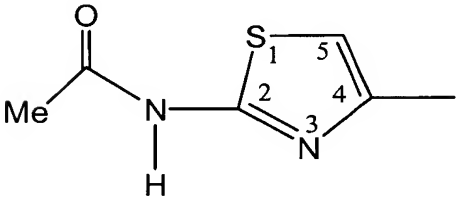
(ii) reacting Compound (3): 

wherein Z is as defined above and the 1,3-thiazole ring is optionally substituted at the 5-position, or a salt thereof with Compound (4):  , wherein L_2 is a leaving group;

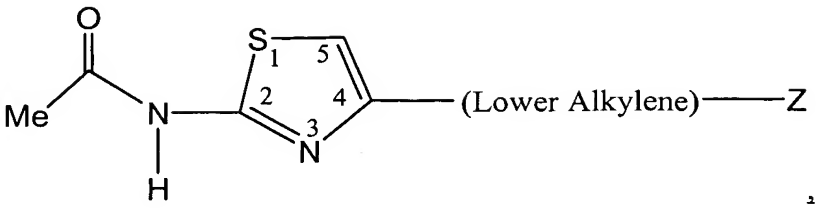
(iii) reacting Compound (6): 

wherein the 1,3-thiazole ring is optionally substituted at the 5-position or a salt thereof with Compound (7): L_3-CH_2-Z, wherein L_3 is a leaving group and Z is as defined above, or a salt thereof;

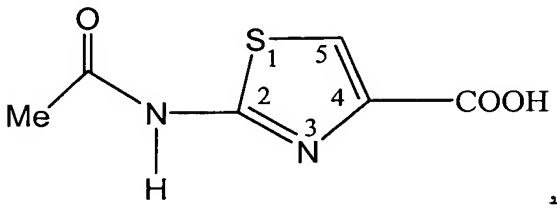
(iv) reduction of Compound (10):

 (Lower Alkenylene)-Z

wherein Z is as defined above and the 1,3-thiazole ring is optionally substituted at the 5-position, or a salt thereof;

to Compound (11): 

wherein Z is as defined above and the 1,3-thiazole ring is optionally substituted at the 5-position[[,]]; or a salt thereof; and

(v) reacting Compound (12): 

, wherein the 1,3-thiazole ring is optionally substituted at the 5-position or a reactive derivative thereof, or a salt thereof with Compound (13): L_4-NH-Z, wherein L^4 is a hydrogen atom or a protecting group and Z is as defined above[[,]]; or a salt thereof.

Claims 9-16 (Canceled)

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A method for treating macular edema comprising:

~~, which method comprises~~

administering to a subject in need thereof [[a]] the compound ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1 in an amount sufficient to treat said subject for macular edema.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The method of claim 17, wherein the compound is:

N-{4-[2-(4-{[amino(imino)methyl]amino}phenyl)ethyl]-1,3-thiazol-2-yl}acetamide,

N-{4-[2-(4-{[amino(imino)methyl]amino}phenyl)ethyl]-5-[4-(methylsulfonyl)benzyl]-1,3-thiazol-2-yl}acetamide,

N-{4-[2-(4-{[hydrazino(imino)methyl]amino}phenyl)ethyl]-5-[4-(methylsulfonyl)benzyl]-1,3-thiazol-2-yl}acetamide,

N-{4-[2-(4-{[hydrazino(imino)methyl]amino}phenyl)ethyl]-1,3-thiazol-2-yl}acetamide, or

N-(4-{2-[4-(2-{[amino(imino)methyl]amino}ethyl)phenyl]ethyl}-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)acetamide,

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

Claims 19-21 (Cancelled)

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The method of claim [[21]] 17, wherein said macular edema is diabetic macular edema.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): The method of claim [[21]] 17, wherein said macular edema is non-diabetic macular edema.

Claims 24-25 (Cancelled)